WORLD PARISH

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FEBRUARY, 1959

DR. THOMAS COKE

Portrait by Frank O. Salisbury in the World Methodist Building at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, U.S.A.

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WORLD PARISH

Vol. VII **February, 1959** **No. 1**

Published by the World Methodist Council and the Association of Methodist Historical Societies (U.S.A.) under the Editorship of the Secretary, Dr. Elmer T. Clark, Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, U.S.A.

NORTH AMERICAN SECTIONS
WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL
Philadelphia, December 9-10, 1958

The North American Sections of the World Methodist Council met at St. George's Church and the Robert Morris Hotel in Philadelphia on December 9-10, 1958. Representatives were present from eight of the ten North American Sections.

Secretary's Report

The Secretary, Dr. Elmer T. Clark, submitted a report as follows:

This is the first meeting of the North American Sections of the World Methodist Council. Regular meetings of this kind are held in England but our inability to have regular meetings has been due to lack of finances. We have endeavored to keep the members informed by the publication and distribution of all reports and minutes and the dissemination of news, but the democracy of our organization would be enhanced by full and free discussion at full meetings of the membership. We hope to arrange this in the future, and it is hoped that all Sections will begin now to set aside funds for the purpose.

Development of the Council

In order to show something of the development of the World Methodist Council since 1951 it seems advisable to mention some more or less well-known facts.

The organization dates from 1881, when the first Ecumenical Methodist Conference met in London on the initiative of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Nine World Conferences have been held, four in England, four in the United States, and one in Canada. At Oxford in 1951 the name was changed to World Methodist Council, a Permanent Secretariat was set up, eight Standing Committees were appointed, and the present Sectional structure was adopted.

Under this structure there are 27 Sections representing all areas and groups of the Methodist world. Each Section has its own membership, vary-

ing from two each in Hong Kong, and Taiwan to seventy-five from The Methodist Church in the United States. In some cases, as in Central and South America, Continental Europe, and parts of Africa and Asia, two or more groups have been included in one Section, and elsewhere, as in Great Britain and the United States, there are more than one; there are three in England and Ireland and seven in the United States. The total membership in all the Sections is 284.

At the World Conference in 1956 a Constitution was adopted. The World Federation of Methodist Women completed its organization and became an affiliate of the World Methodist Council. This great body includes the organized Methodist women in every land; it meets concurrently with the Council and its President is a member of the World Executive Committee. The associated Methodist Historical Societies of the world, known as the International Methodist Historical Society, became a Department of the Council. A movement is under way to form as an affiliate a world organization of Methodist deaconesses. There have been suggestions for perfecting world organizations of laymen and youth, but these have not materialized.

Headquarters

The Council has headquarters in England and America. In 1955 we erected at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, the World Methodist Building, which houses our offices and the departmental Association of Methodist Historical Societies. The building is worth around $100,000 and was the gift of the people of the Southeastern Jurisdiction, under the leadership of the Bishops. Its collection of Wesleyana is probably worth an equal amount and has received wide publicity as one of the world's finest. There is now under discussion the feasibility of establishing an office in the new Ecumenical Center being erected in New York, and this will probably be done if funds are available.

Executive Committee

The World Executive Committee has 41 members from eleven countries. Five Sections in the United States and Canada are now represented on this Committee and it is hoped that there may be a representative from the other Sections. In England and in The Methodist Church, U.S.A., there are Executive Committees which meet annually, and in England the whole Section meets from time to time. The World Executive Committee will have its next meeting at Epworth-by-the-Sea in Georgia on September 10-15, 1959. The 1960 meeting will be held in the Geneva Area in August of that year.

Conferences

It is now well-known that the Tenth World Methodist Conference will be held at Oslo, Norway, in August, 1961.

In Europe there has been organized a Consultative Conference of all the Sections there. It meets biennially. The last meeting, at Stockholm in 1957, had representatives from fifteen countries. The next meeting will be at Bristol, England, in 1959. A similar Regional Conference for South Africa and Southern and Northern Rhodesia will meet at Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, on April 7-12, 1959. Discussions are under way which may

result in enlarging this conference to include the Congo and other areas of Africa.

In the Western Hemisphere we have not been able to form a similar conference. It is hoped that something of the kind may eventuate from the present meeting.

Reference should here be made to the Bi-Centenary celebration of Methodism in the West Indies in 1960. The conversion of Nathaniel Gilbert and his servants by John Wesley, the beginning of preaching by them at Antigua in 1760, its continuation by John Baxter, and Dr. Thomas Coke's connection with the work in the West Indies is one of the most fascinating chapters of our history. It is hoped that a delegation from the continent may attend the celebration and that relations between Caribbean Methodism and that of the American continent may be strengthened at every point.

The Free Methodist Church will celebrate its centennial at the General Conference of 1960. It is probable that representatives of other Methodist bodies will want to attend that significant observance.

In the near future we will reach the bi-centennial of the beginning of Methodist preaching in the United States. All are aware of the uncertainty which exists as to the priority of Maryland or New York, and this will have a bearing on the date selected. It is suggested that a committee be constituted to consider this matter.

In 1957 there was held at Geneva the first meeting of the officers of all the World Confessional Councils. The World Methodist Council was represented by four persons, two from the United States, one from England, and one from Switzerland. Secretaries of the World Council of Churches participated in all sessions. There was a luncheon meeting in Denmark in August, 1958, and another full-fledged meeting is planned for 1959. These contacts disclosed that other Councils, especially the Lutheran, Presbyterian and Baptist bodies, are much stronger in budget, personnel and program than our own.

Standing Committees

Some of the Standing Committees have functioned admirably.

The Committee on Exchange of Preachers annually arranges ten or twelve pulpit exchanges between English and American preachers. One long-term exchange was arranged with Australia, and the committee hopes to overcome language barriers and extend the program to other countries.

The Committee on Evangelism in 1952 and 1953 led a world-wide Methodist evangelistic movement which in some countries had important spiritual results and which in Australia continues to function.

The Committee on the Oxford Institute and Memorial has organized a theological institute at Lincoln College, Oxford, which this year had an attendance of one hundred students and professors from 17 countries. Of these thirty-five were from the United States, and Canada and Jamaica each had a representative. The next institute will be held in 1962 and these will become the major aspect of the committee's functions.

The Committee on Christian Education called a conference at Kingswood School in 1958, which was attended by one American Methodist educator. In January, 1959 the committee will sponsor the first European Methodist Youth Conference at Stuttgart in Germany.

The Faith and Order Committee regularly presents to the World Executive Committee data on schemes of church union in which Methodists are involved and offers unofficial advice and counsel to the negotiating Methodist bodies. Its purpose is to further union and to see that all Methodist values are preserved therein.

Publicity and Communications

The World Methodist Council circulates from time to time a small bulletin, *World Parish.* In this it publishes the minutes of its meetings, reports of its Secretaries, and news of the Methodist world. It has an *Information Service* bulletin which is mailed at irregular intervals. It has named a Methodist correspondent for the *Ecumenical News Service* in Geneva and a committee is seeking to develop other forms of communication.

Arrangements have been made to publish the papers presented at the Oxford Theological Institute in the *London Quarterly,* probably in the spring or summer of 1959. This will be given wide distribution among the members of the various Sections.

Publications

At the Oxford Conference in 1951 a rather ambitious program was adopted which called for the production and publication of certain works. This whole program has been carried out with the exception of the *Encyclopedia of Methodism.* The most extensive and important of these is the *Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury,* with which the Methodist world is now familiar. This work has received the high endorsement of the President, the Congress, and the Historical Publications Commission of the United States. It is the first work ever published jointly by the Methodist presses of both the United States and Great Britain.

Preliminary work has been started on the *Encyclopedia of Methodism.* This was recommended by the Ecumenical Methodist Conference about sixty years ago, and it has been similarly recommended several times since that date. There has been no such Methodist work since 1876 and it is long overdue. The Southern Baptist Church has recently published an Encyclopedia in two large volumes, the Mennonites are bringing out a similar work in four volumes of 1000 pages each, and the Lutheran World Federation is working on one of still larger proportions. In our own work we will need contributors from every Section of the World Methodist Council and an editor in each denominational group.

The British Conference is producing a new *History of Methodism* in three or four volumes and much work has already been completed. We are in consultation with historians and publishers with reference to a complementary *History of American Methodism.* There has been no such history of a definitive nature for more than half a century.

Epworth Rectory

The two hundred and fifty-year old home of the Wesleys has been purchased by the British Conference and completely reconditioned. We were asked to raise $50,000 for this project. The fund has now been com-

pleted, although money advanced from other funds should be replaced. Many members of the Sections here represented aided liberally in the fund. The property is now in an excellent state of preservation and a warden is in residence. The building is used for small conferences and there are some guest rooms for the accommodation of visitors. For its future maintenance a "living endowment" will be raised from Methodists all over the world. There is a Board of Managing Trustees which has six Americans in its membership.

Asbury House

The small cottage in which Francis Asbury was reared in West Bromwich has been taken over by the Town Council and designated as an historic spot. It is now being restored to its original state and a caretaker will be installed in a similar cottage attached. In due course an official dedication ceremony will be held at which the American Ambassador and leaders of the British Government and Methodism will be invited to participate. We have made no financial contribution to this, but we will undoubtedly be asked to do so.

Finances

Section XIII has paid all the administrative expenses in this country, but the other Sections have made contributions to the Epworth Rectory and other funds. Each Section of the Council provides for its own costs, and we have thus far created no central fund for common expenses. The financial appeals that have come from Sections outside the United States emphasize the need for such a fund.

A world fund should not mean the abandonment of the principle that the Sections are financially autonomous, but it would enable the Council to supplement the funds of the smaller Sections in matters of general interest. It has been recommended that such a fund, not very large at first, should be created and that rules for its administration should be made. Each Section should contribute to the fund on a proportionate basis to be fairly determined.

In the meantime it is hoped that each Section in the Western Hemisphere will make plans for a budget of its own and will set aside funds for its representation at the World Conference in 1961.

Methodist Union

At the 1958 meeting of the World Executive Committee, reports were made concerning several plans of church union in which Methodists are involved. The discussion was so important that a longer period is to be set aside at the next meeting.

Little consideration has been given to Methodist union, however. There is a sense in which Methodists are already united, since there are no real thological differences between them and the variations in policy are not very important, and should easily be adjusted. Nevertheless they are divided into forty or more independent denominations, among most of which there were few fraternal contracts and no real cooperation until the organization of the World Methodist Council.

As our fellowship and discussions continue we will almost certainly

be forced to face this situation, and to seek a more intimate relationship. It is felt that American Methodists will desire to bring about some form of world-wide unity. The larger ecumenicity will always be sought, but there are those who believe that the best, and indeed the only practicable way to achieve world Christian unity is to seek first to reduce the hundreds of scattered denominations into a relatively few great confessional groups.

United Churches

The Council is fortunate in having the adherence of certain United Churches which have a considerable number of former Methodists. The United Church of Canada is a full-fledged member and is represented on the Executive Committee. The United Church of South Africa preferred a fraternal relationship rather than membership. In view of the schemes of union now under discussion, it seems probable that this type of membership will increase. We have not fully studied the full implications involved in all this, but we should do so. The fellowship and program of World Methodism should be greatly enriched by the active participation of the union bodies.

Perhaps it should here be pointed out that the Evangelical-United Brethren Church has a Methodist background and the same is true of the Church of the Nazarene. There are also several small Methodist bodies which are not in the membership of the World Methodist Council. Advice is needed as to whether these, or any of them, should be invited to become members.

Respectfully submitted,
Elmer T. Clark, *Secretary*

Other Reports

Mr. Edwin L. Jones reported that the Epworth Rectory Fund of approximately $50,000 had been raised in full, and he thanked the Bishops of The Methodist Church and the others who had made possible the success of this enterprise.

Dr. T. Otto Nall presented a report for the Committee on Exchange of Preachers. This was adopted and Dr. Nall was asked to carry the exchanges into effect.

Dr. Dow Kirkpatrick made a brief report on the Oxford Institute of Theological Studies.

West Indies

The Rev. Hugh Sherlock of Jamaica, British West Indies, stated that the Bi-Centenary of Methodism in the West Indies would be celebrated at Antigua in 1960. He expressed the hope that the Church there would become an autonomous conference in that year. Mr. Sherlock invited continental members to be represented at the Bi-Centenary.

He stated that two projects were being promoted in connection with the observance: the purchase of the Nathaniel Gilbert home at Antigua for 7500 pounds, and the building of a church, school and parsonage at Trinidad, the capitol of the new West Indies Commonwealth, at a cost of 30,000 pounds. He made an appeal for financial help on these projects.

Program

The following program was carried out:

Opening Address: Bishop Paul E. Martin, Chairman, Section XIIII.

Address:: "The Larger Values in the World Methodist Council," Dr. Ernest E. Long, United Church of Canada, Section XIV.

Address: "The Functioning of the World Methodist Council," Bishop W. J. Walls, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Section XVI.

Address: "American Methodism and World Methodist Union," Bishop Ivan Lee Holt, Past President of the World Methodist Council. Discussion led by Miss Dorothy McConnell.

Concluding Address: "The Future Polcy of the World Methodist Council," Bishop Arthur J. Moore, The Methodist Church, Section XIII. Discussion led by Dr. T. Otto Nall.

Methodist Union

Bishop Holt in his address raised the question of Methodist Union vs National Unions.

Dr. Clark stated that Methodist Union was to be sought, (1). because it could be achieved while interconfessional union could not be achieved for a century or more, and (2). that other unions all had an element of nationalism which was contrary to the spirit of Christ.

Dr. Fred B. Newell spoke to the same effect, declaring that we were trying to abolish denominations based on theological differences and institute churches based on nationalism. The latter he declared to be dangerous.

Sesquicentennial of Methodist Constitution

On the evening of December 9 there was a large mass meeting at the Academy of Music commemorating the sesqui-centennial of the adoption of the Constitution of American Methodism. Mr. Charles C. Parlin, Vice President of the World Methodist Council, presided, there was an academic procession, and Bishop Fred P. Corson, Vice President of the World Methodist Council, delivered an address, "Methodism's Magna Charta".

At noon on December 9 there was a luncheon at the Robert Morris Hotel in honor of the Judicial Council of The Methodist Church.

Transactions of Business

The following items of business were transacted:

1. There was discussion concerning the creation of a World Fund to be administered by the Executive Committee of the World Methodist Council for common expenses. Representatives of each of the bodies represented agreed that their Sections would make contributions on a proportionate basis, and the Secretary was asked to contact the other Sections throughout the world with reference to the matter.

2. The Secretary was instructed to send messages to Dr. W. E. Sangster, who is ill in London, and to Sir Hugh Foote, Governor of Cyprus, who occupies a critical position in the present world situation.

3. The recent address of the Bishops of The Methodist Church was endorsed, and the Secretary was asked to secure a copy of that address.

4. Announcement was made concerning the proposed *History of American Methodism* and the *Encyclopedia of Methodism*, with the statement that all Methodist bodies everywhere would be asked to cooperate in these projects.

5. Dr. Ralph Stoody was asked to convey the thanks of the body to the editors of the *Saturday Evening Post* for the publication of an article concerning the rural ministry.

6. By standing vote the body expressed its thanks to Bishop Fred P. Corson, Dr. Frederick Maser, and others of the Philadelphia committee on arrangements for the hospitality extended to the meeting.

ELMER T. CLARK, *Secretary*

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, SECTION XIII

PHILADELPHIA

DECEMBER 8, 1858

The Executive Committee of Section XIII of the World Methodist Council met at the Robert Morris Hotel, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, at 6 p.m. on Monday, December 8, 1958. Those present were Bishop Paul E. Martin, Chairman, who presided, Bishop Fred P. Corson and Dr. Oscar T. Olson Vice Chairmen, Dr. Elmer T. Clark, Secretary, Mr. Edwin L. Jones, Treasurer, Dr. T. Otto Nall, Dr. J. Manning Potts, Bishop Ivan Lee Holt, Mrs. J. Fount Tillman, Mrs. Paul Arrington, Miss Dorothy McConnell, Bishop Arthur J. Moore, Dr. R. E. L. Bearden, and Rev. James W. Fowler, Jr. Mrs. Louise Stahl represented the secretarial staff from the headquarters office. Visitors included Bishop F. Gerald Ensley, Bishop S. L. Greene of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and Dr. Dow Kirkpatrick.

The report of the Budget and Finance Committee was presented by Bishop Fred P. Corson. This recommended a budget of $119,400 per year, beginning in 1960. Bishop Arthur J. Moore, Miss Dorothy McConnell, Mr. Jones and Dr. Olson spoke on the necessity of an enlarged program for the World Methodist Council. Bishop Corson, Miss McConnell and Dr. Clark were appointed as a committee to present the report to the Council on World Service and Finance of The Methodist Church.

Dr. Dow Kirkpatrick spoke about the publication of the papers of the Oxford Theological Institute. The Secretary stated that we had appropriated $280.00 to purchase copies of the periodical in which the papers are to be published and that some other funds have been received for the same purpose.

ELMER T. CLARK, *Secretary*

DICTIONARY OF WORLD METHODISM

Meetings of Methodist librarians, historians, and publishers were held at 150 Fifth Avenue, New York City, on Friday, December 5, 1958 at 3 P.M., and at the Robert Morris Hotel in Philadelphia at 3 P.M. on Monday, December 8, 1958. Those present at New York were Miss Dorothy Woodruff, Dr. Vernon B. Hampton, the Rev. Arthur B. Moss, and Dr. Elmer T. Clark. Among those present at the Philadelphia meeting were Dr. T. Otto Nall, Dr. Jacob S. Payton, Dr. J. Manning Potts, Dr. Frank B. Stanger, Dr. Lester A. Welliver, Dr. Frederick E. Maser, Rev. Lawrence Sherwood, Rev. Edwin Schell, Mrs. Louise Stahl, Miss Elizabeth Hughey, Mr. Cecil D. Jones, and Dr. Elmer T. Clark.

Dr. Clark submitted a memorandum with reference to the proposed *Methodist Encyclopedia*. This memorandum was adopted in principle, and Dr. Clark and his staff were authorized to proceed to set up an organization and begin the work of compiling a list of subjects to be covered.

It was agreed that the work should be in the nature of an extended Dictionary of Methodism rather than a full-scale Encyclopedia. It should cover World Methodism from the historical approach, thus avoiding the inclusion of material which would soon be out of date. Contributing editors should be selected from all the Methodist groups in the world.

With reference to the *History of American Methodism*, it was agreed that work should be started at an early date. The table of contents of the similar work being produced in England was distributed for study. A committee was appointed to give further study to the work under the chairmanship of Dr. Emory Bucke, Book Editor of The Methodist Church. That committee was composed of the following: Bishop W. C. Martin, Bishop Paul N. Garber, Bishop F. Gerald Ensley, representing the Council of Bishops; Dr. Elmer T. Clark, Dr. J. Manning Potts, Dr. T. Otto Nall, and Dr. Leland D. Case, representing the World Methodist Council and the Association of Methodist Historical Societies; Dr. William R. Cannon, Dr. Gerald O. McCulloh, and one other to be selected, representing the theological seminaries.

The Secretary was asked to communicate with Dr. Frank Cumbers and Dr. Gordon Rupp in England with reference to an integration of the two Histories of Methodism.

ELMER T. CLARK, *Secretary*

ASSOCIATION OF METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETIES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

DECEMBER 12, 1958

The Executive Committee of the Association of Methodist Historical Societies met at the Annapolis Hotel, Washington, D.C., at 9:00 A.M., Friday, December 12, 1958. Those present were: Elmer T. Clark, Executive Secretary, Mrs. Louise Stahl, Treasurer, T. Otto Nall, Jacob S. Payton, J. Manning Potts, Frank B. Stanger, Lester A. Welliver, Frederick E. Maser, and Lawrence Sherwood.

Among the visitors were Leland D. Case, Editor of *Together*, Brooks Little, Melvin Steadman, Edwin Schell, Douglas R. Chandler, of Wesley Theological Seminary, O. B. Fanning, of Methodist Information, Caspar Nannes, Religious Editor of the *Washington Star*, Herbert E. Kahler and Charles W. Porter of the National Park Service.

Dr. Welliver presided.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as printed and circulated in *World Parish*.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Executive Secretary presented agenda, which were adopted. He also presented his annual report, items from which constituted the business of the meeting. The report follows:

The Association of Methodist Historical Societies is the officially recognized historical organization of The Methodist Church and its Constitution appears in the *Discipline*. It is a federation of four active Jurisdictional and seventy-eight Annual Conference Societies. We have never been able to organize a Society in the Central Jurisdiction, and the Society in the Western Jurisdiction seems to have lapsed. A new Society has been formed in the Delaware Conference.

Our Association is part of a world-wide chain of Methodist Societies, federated in the International Society which is a department of the World Methodist Council. These relationships are embodied in our Constitution and printed in the *Discipline;* the officers of the World Methodist Council from The Methodist Church are members of this Executive Committee.

These relationships are of great importance, since they lift our Association from a local to a global level and give it a connection not only with World Methodism and historical societies in many lands, but also with such bodies as the World Federation of Methodist Women and the World Federation of Methodist Deaconesses now being formed. More practically, it has in effect doubled our budget, provided offices without cost, and enabled us to maintain a staff that could not possibly be supported by the Association alone.

Finances

The Treasurer will present a detailed report. It is sufficient to state here that at the close of the fiscal year there was a budgetary balance of $2,070.43 and a reserve fund of $6,495.45. Our annual budget is $24,250, of which $4,000 is designated for St. George's and John Street Churches and $250 is for a study of Methodist shrines as instructed by the General Conference. It is recommended that the same budget be continued for the ensuing year. It is, of course, understood that our headquarters and two-thirds of our office expenses are provided by the World Methodist Council.

Publications

The *Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury* has at last been published. As is well known, this was projected by the Historical Publications Commission and the Congress of the United States and by the World Methodist Council in 1951. The work was nearly all done by editors from this Association and it was published jointly by the Epworth Press in Great Britain and the Abingdon Press in this country. It is under the highest auspices ever given to any Methodist publication. All members of this Association should promote the work in every possible way, so that the publishers who have invested so much in it may suffer no loss.

Although a diligent search was made everywhere, eight additional Asbury letters have turned up since the volume of letters was printed. These will be printed in our bulletin. It is regrettable that the materials were not located earlier, but we are reminded that a whole volume of Wesley letters have been discovered since the publication of *The Letters of John Wesley* in 1931.

The remaining work in the publication program adopted in 1951 is an *Encyclopedia of Methodism*, which we are now ready to undertake. Conversations with interested persons have recently been held. This will require years for completion. It will involve the selection of editors in every land and denominational group, the compilation of a list of subjects to be covered, agreeing upon editorial rules and standards, setting up a filing system, preparing a book of suggestions and instructions, selecting writers and assigning subjects, and doing the necessary detail work. I have recently prepared some articles for the German *Weltkirchen Lexikon* and the materials provided for this work will be of considerable assistance.

Encyclopedias have recently been published by the Southern Baptists and the Mennonites. The Lutherans have such a work under way on a world basis. The *Mennonite Encyclopedia* is in four volumes, and has 3,200 pages, 400 illustrations, 105 maps, and 10,000 articles. This indicates the largeness of the task involved in producing a comparable Methodist work.

The conversations above mentioned included the proposed *History of American Methodism* which we hope to publish to complement the work already under way in Great Britain. Another edition of *Who's Who In Methodism*, a *Life of Francis Asbury*, an *Index of Memoirs*, and the publication of various early American manuscripts are under discussion.

Historical Works

It is gratifying to note a seeming revival of interest in histories of conferences and local churches. In the past two or three years there have been histories of the Newark and North Indiana Conferences, Methodism in Virginia and Georgia, and the Mississippi Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church. A history of Alabama Methodism is ready for the press and the same is true of a biography of Jesse Walker. Histories of Methodism in Missouri and in the New Jersey Conference are under way.

Among other histories that have recently appeared are those of Saint George's Church in Philadelphia; the Chattanooga area; Harrison Church in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina; Laurel Heights Church in San Antonio; Jonesboro Heights Church in Sanford, North Carolina; Galloway Memorial Church in Jackson, Mississippi; Boulevard Church in Binghampton, New York; First Church in Dallas, Texas; the Jamestown, New York area; Beaufort, North Carolina; and Middle Tennesssee. In Georgia a history of each church in the entire state has been secured and the manuscripts have been deposited at Emory University. There have been two volumes about Dickinson College, a play about Charles Wesley in mimeograph form, and other materials that might be mentioned.

Two or three histories of local churches are under way, and we frequently receive requests for suggestions and help. This should be encouraged. Especially we should prepare and circulate a booklet or guide on the subject.

Commemorations

In 1960 the Bi-Centenary of Methodism in the West Indies will be observed. In 1960 also the Free Methodist Church will celebrate its centenary. All Methodists are interested in these events and it is hoped that we may be represented at each.

In the near future we should observe the Bi-Centenary of the beginning of Methodist preaching in the United States. The uncertainty and rival claims in this field will have a bearing on the time and nature of any observance which may be organized. All Methodist bodies will be interested and consideration should be given to the subject. We may name a committee to restudy the subject or ask the Council of Bishops to assume responsibility.

Early Manuscripts

A committee was appointed at the last meeting to locate and try to secure copies of early Methodist manuscripts. We have been working on this in our office and have secured typescripts of the Journals of Thomas Rankin, Joseph Pilmoor, William Colbert, Robert Ayres, Jacob Lanius, Andrew Monroe, and David R. McAnally. Mrs. Stahl has transcribed the Diary of Thomas Haskins and compared it with a typescript in the University of Chicago. We are cooperating with Dr. Potts in transcribing the manuscripts of Henry Boehm, and we have secured a typescript of materials on James Dempster. In cooperation with Dr. Payton we have compiled a list of manuscripts and are submitting the same as a part of this report. It is hoped that this list will be extended. We are continuing our efforts to secure copies of these documents.

We shall endeavor to publish the Haskins Diary, and again express our willingness to cooperate in the publication of the Pilmoor Journal.

General Conference

There has been no meeting of the committee on General Conference legislation. Your Secretary has recently appeared before the Council on World Service and Finance and submitted a report which was well received. In 1956 we secured the adoption of our Constitution and its inclusion in the *Discipline*. We also secured a modest appropriation and were made the agency for administering the fund appropriated for St. George's and John Street Churches. We did not want the latter responsibility, but the General Conference refused to make an appropriation to a local church lest a precedent be set. It was this situation which led the General Conference to instruct this association to make a study and prepare a report on the whole matter of Methodist shrines.

In view of our experience in 1956, our requests of the 1960 General Conference should be held to the minimum, and should not be in the nature of memorials but embodied in the report we must make.

It is recommended that we constitute a Committee on Policy and Budget, following the example of the World Methodist Council. This committee should formulate its report before the 1959 meeting of the Council on World Service and Finance.

Methodist Landmarks

At our last meeting a committee was appointed to asssist in preparing our report to the General Conference on Methodist shrines. We have gathered a mass of material and Dr. Leland Case and TOGETHER Magazine are cooperating. We hope to locate and secure data on all the Methodist historical landmarks in the United States, and eventually to publish a guide book containing a map or series of maps which will be useful to travellers and all persons interested in the subject.

The Asbury House

It has been previously reported that the boyhood home of Francis Asbury at West Bromwich in England has been taken over by the town council and designated as a historic spot, which will guarantee its perpetuation. The secretary visited the cottage in July, 1958, in the company of the town officials. Reconstruction had not actually started at that time. There is an adjoining cottage in which a caretaker will live. The work required will not be expensive and it is expected that the opening ceremonies, which will be attended by notable persons, will be held in the summer or autumn of 1959. We will be expected to make some financial contribution to the work but definite information is not available.

Conclusion

In summary, the Association, in cooperation with other agencies in some cases, has before it the following enterprises:

1. An Encyclopedia of Methodism.
2. A History of American Methodism.
3. A Biography of Francis Asbury.
4. Who's Who In Methodism, Second Edition.
5. An Index of Memoirs.
6. Collection and Publication of Early Methodist Manuscripts.
7. Maps and Guide Book of Methodist Historical Landmarks.
8. Celebration of Bi-Centenary of American Methodism.
9. Guide for Church Historians.

This is a very large program which will require the cooperation of all competent persons whose services can be enlisted. Our comprehensive purpose, stated in the *Discipline,* is "to gather, preserve, and disseminate materials and facts on the history of Methodism". We are trying to make all Methodists familiar with what Methodism is and what it has done. In this we are serving every agency and program of the whole Church. Loyalty and liberality are based on information, and if all our people knew our glorious history and understood our heritage they would give better support to the total work of the Church. Those who do not know and treasure their past will never achieve a great future.

Respectfully submitted
ELMER T. CLARK, *Executive Secretary*

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer presented a report as follows:

BALANCE—May 31, 1958		$ 8,569.88
Current Expense	$ 2,574.43	
Reserve Fund	5,995.45	

RECEIPTS

Appropriation from World Service	$10,104.10	
Miscellaneous receipts and refunds	3,920.33	14,024.43

DISBURSEMENTS

Salaries	$ 1,250.00	
Office Personnel	2,986.15	
Office Expense & Maintenance	2,011.65	
Meetings and Travel	2,063.67	
Editorial and Publication	1,060.96	
Archives Material	889.21	
Miscellaneous & Contingent	1,010.00	
St. George's Church	500.00	
John Street Church	834.00	12,605.64
BALANCE—November 30, 1958		$ 3,993.22
Reserve Fund		6,010.41

MRS. KENNETH STAHL, *Treasurer*

The current budget was adopted for the ensuing year. The Executive Secretary was authorized to make any needed readjustments within the total with special reference to salaries.

Publications

The recently published *Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury* was presented and discussed. The Executive Secretary stated that some newly discovered letters would be published. It was suggested that the Bishops be asked to stress the work at all annual conference sessions and that the publishers be requested to send promotional materials to church libraries, conference historical societies, and institutions.

It was agreed that all persons who had corrections to suggest should send them to the Secretary's office.

The Secretary reported that he had held a conference with librarians, historians, and Abingdon Press officials with reference to the *Encyclopedia of Methodism* and the *History of American Methodism*. A committee on the latter work was being formed under the chairmanship of Dr. Emory Bucke, the Book Editor. T. Otto Nall, Leland Case, J. Manning Potts, and Elmer T. Clark were named to represent the Association on that committee.

A vote of thanks was extended to the publishers for the interest in Methodist history manifested in the publication of the Asbury volumes. The Secretary was asked to include this commendation in his report to the General Conference.

Dr. Philip Hamer, Executive Director of the National Historical Publications Commission, was presented and he extended the congratulations of the Commission on the successful completion of the task of editing Asbury's *Journal* and collecting the *Letters*.

St. George's Church

Dr. Herbert E. Kahler and Dr. Charles W. Porter of the National Park Service were presented. Dr. Kahler stated that a movement has been started to include St. George's Church in the Independence National Historical Park. He pointed out that a bill to that effect had been presented to the Congress and approved by the proper committees, but had not been passed by the Congress itself.

The following resolution was unanimously adopted.

Resolved: The American Association of Historical Societies hereby expresses its earnest desire that the property surrounding Old St. George's Methodist Church, the world's oldest Methodist edifice in continuous service, located at the southeast corner of Fourth and New Streets, Philadelphia, near Independence Hall, be designated a unit of Independence National Historical Park, and that we respectfully request the Congress to enact such legislation.

The Secretary was instructed to bring this to the attention of members of Congress and especially to request the Bishops to give it proper support.

Policy and Budget

There was discussion concerning the future policy and budget of the Association. The Secretary was authorized to set up a committee to prepare a report and present it to the Commission on World Service and Finance.

Dr. Frank B. Stanger presented the matter of financial support for Barratt's Chapel in Delaware. The Secretary was asked to secure information and include the item on his report to the General Conference.

Methodist Manuscripts

The Secretary presented as a part of his report a list of extant Methodist manuscripts. There was discussion and members were asked to make additions to this list.

Methodist Landmarks

Dr. Leland Case made an address on "Methodist Landmarks". In discussion Lawrence Sherwood made a brief statement for the committee on Methodist Shrines. Dr. Case exhibited the lay-out of a feature on Methodist historical spots being prepared for the General Conference issue of TOGETHER. The Secretary stated that he had been working with Dr. Case on this and would use the material in his report to the General Conference.

Dr. Case suggested a nation-wide movement to induce the preparation of local church histories. Dr. Frederick Maser and Dr. Frank Stanger were appointed as a committee to prepare a book of suggestions for the authors of such histories.

Light on Early Methodist History

Melvin Lee Steadman, Jr., read a paper on the early references to Robert Strawbridge and Methodism in Leesburg, which seemed to throw new light on the matter of the priority of Methodist beginnings in this country. A vote of thanks was extended to Mr. Steadman, and the Secretary was asked to publish his paper.

The Secretary stated that other papers dealing with priority should be reprinted, and that he was trying to secure the document prepared in 1916 by Dr. Carroll entitled, "Beginnings of Methodism in America".

Edwin Schell spoke on some early materials in the museum at Lovely Lane Church in Baltimore and distributed some documents. He presented to the Secretary some early copies of the Methodist Magazine published at Baltimore and the early minutes of the Association of Methodist Historical Societies.

The Committee adjourned at 4:00 P.M.

Elmer T. Clark, *Executive Secretary*

The Methodist Theological Seminary at Frankfurt am-Main, Germany, is expanding its work to become the training center for Methodist missionary candidates from West Germany and Switzerland.

The recent Annual Conference of Bolivian Methodists reported significant gains—Sunday-school membership up 52 per cent in the past year, and church membership in a 15-per cent gain. Seven new circuits have been opened and one new district, making a total of 24 preaching places in what the American church calls a "land of decision." . . . Every 10 days during the past four years a new Methodist church has been organized in Korea, another "land of decision."

THE CONSTITUTION

AMERICAN METHODISM'S MAGNA CHARTA

By Bishop Fred Pierce Corson

An address before the North American Sections of The World Methodist Council, Philadelphia, December 9, 1958.

The Constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church was drawn up and adopted in the General Conference of 1808. While 1958 marks the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of this event, there should be something more than longevity to justify its celebration. True, our Constitution achieves importance because it is old. There is a high mortality in constitutions, and many which survive in name become unrecognizable because of the changes in structure and in interpretation. The Constitution of the Methodist Church has survived one separation, two major divisions of its people and a reunion of these branches in a new church. It stands today in its essentials substantially the same as in the year of its origin. Its unchanging imprint on the life of the church has preserved for Methodism its distinctiveness, and its providential provisions have made possible Methodism's power to grow and to adapt itself to the changing conditions of the age and world it serves. In the year the Constitution was adopted, the total membership of the Methodist Church was about that of the Philadelphia Annual Conference now. It owned little property and had almost no institutions. Its work was national in scope and its outreach embraced only the United States and its territories. There is no indication that the present extension and variety in the work of the Methodist Church was even remotely foreseen by the framers of the Constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Yet for a church whose membership has increased an hundred fold and whose expansion has moved its work from one to fifty-two or more countries and whose organizational program is as markedly different now as the crossroads general store differs from the world-wide industrial and commercial combines, the Constitution which forms the foundation of the structure is still serviceable and adequate. No significant sentiment is expressed to make fundamental changes in this document. No challenge of the growing services of the church has found in the Constitution insurmountable barriers to its realization. No section of the Methodist world church is petitioning the General Conference for powers which would not be permissive under the existing charter.

These are the facts and circumstances which make such an anniversary celebration of the Constitution of the Methodist Church appropriate, deserved and profitable. It is important that our people understand what we have in this instrument of organization. In times when new occasions demand new processes, an understanding of the true nature of our basic law becomes a prerequisite to the formulation of such legislation for change. Its capacity to allow for diversity while maintaining unity, demonstrated in the past, should give the church strong encouragement both to preserve the fundamental principles of this Constitution and to find the ways to meet new situations within the framework of our original charter.

To this instrument we propose a toast on this sesquicentennial celebration of its origin: The Constitution of the Methodist Church, to which we

are indebted for our greatness and to which we are committed for its preservation!

In 1908 the observance of the one hundredth anniversary of the framing of the Constitution took place in the General Conference. Outstanding addresses were delivered by distinguished representatives of both the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The trend of these addresses was in the direction of an analysis of the Constitution's contents, which in retrospect appears to be an important preparation for the conversations which led to reunion in 1939. It was the realization that the things that separated us were not incompatible with the fundamentals of our origin and that union did not involve a surrender of these principles but rather an adaptation of their provisions which made union possible.

Today it appears that in an appreciation and understanding of the fundamental law under which we operate, assurance for the future of episcopal Methodism is to be secured.

These objectives, however, cannot be realized unless we know something about the origin of the Constitution.

Origins

While the year 1808 saw it take form quickly and completely, this climax was the fruition of a chain of events which went back to Methodism's beginnings. The document embodied an idea whose hour had been long in coming.

It was inherent in the colonization of America. The first settlers in the New World were a vigorous, ambitious people who left the Old World because they were forced out, and although they brought along their established institutions these underwent rapid changes in the New World. As early as 1651 the Massachusetts Bay Colony declared that "our allegiance binds us not to the laws of England any longer than that we live in England." This was a statement of inevitability rather than a declaration of revolt. English institutions would survive but they would be modified and separated from the home soil out of which they sprang.

And the institution of the church was no exception. One hundred years later when Methodists began to appear on American shores they brought with them the institutions of the Wesley movement. These were always to be retained, but like the political and social institutions, it was inevitable that they would be separated from the control of their origin and modified and adapted in the New World. Until Asbury's ascendance to leadership the normal unfolding of this growing process was hampered by leadership which itself could not adjust to the New World. Rankin and Shadford failed not because of inability but because of inflexibility. Asbury, given the responsibility, responded to this new environment. How British he was does not appear from the record. No doubt he suffered the pangs of separation and longed at times for the ways of the homeland. Find me a Britisher who would not! He must have thought often of the necessities of his new responsibilities of leadership, but fortunately he appeared to formulate a day-to-day philosophy of action along the pragmatic lines with which Methodism had already become identified. Asbury, unlikely as he might have appeared at the Bristol Conference, which commissioned him for his American assignment, was a natural for leadership in the New World. He possessed the ability to "play by ear," the "attribute of eccle-

siastical intuition," in situations which had no precedents and under conditions which isolated him from his teacher. He made some mistakes but, thank God, none of them were fatal or irretrievable. He made also significant and wise decisions which found embodiment in the Constitution of 1808.

One was his refusal to assume the office of a bishop without the election by his peers. Another was his example in the itineracy—going himself to the outposts and moving from place to place—which proved its workability and guaranteed its practice. A man of lesser wisdom and character might have taken Wesley's direction to appoint Whatcoat to the episcopacy, but refusing to obey without the preachers' vote made both Whatcoat's election and the formation of the Methodist Episcopal Church certainties. Striking Wesley's name from the minutes as evidence of this separation was an unnecessary and a shameful act on the part of the conference, but the explanation that such incivility was the expression of "growing pains" rather than defiance, is supported by the spirit in which Wesley's name was restored at the subsequent conference. Benjamin Franklin described the Methodists also when in the same years these events happened he said of the American people, "We are the sons of the earth and like Antaeus in the fable, if in wrestling with a Hercules we now and then receive a fall, the touch of our parent will communicate to us fresh strength and vigor to renew the contest."

The impact of the frontier was another potent influence in the framing of the Methodist Constitution. It lifted up the necessity and effectiveness of an itinerant ministry. It centered attention on the provisions for a growing rather than a static church. It was the laboratory in which the fundamentals of Methodism's doctrine, evangelism and education were developed and tested. It turned the thoughts of the people in the settled communities concerned with a multitude of their own problems toward the wider call of the gospel and its missionary obligations. The broad expanse covered by the circuit riders made first the multiplication of the conferences a necessity for administration and later prompted the plan for a representative General Conference. Vitality, vigor and adaptability flowed into American Methodism through its frontier ministry.

The insularism and inflexibility of the Church of England not only hastened the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church but by contrast pointed up many practices and procedures it adopted. The Methodist type of ordination and episcopal administration, as well as the need for New World autonomy in church affairs, appeared more sharply beside the inadequacies of the Church of England then at work in America.

Personalities naturally had much to do with the framing of the Constitution and with the form it took. While it cannot be said that the Constitution was the lengthened shadow of one man, it is true to say that it is the lengthened shadow of the few who were exercising leadership at that time. Asbury, sensitive to the needs and the spirit of the New World, was a major influence both because of his office and of himself. McKendree, younger and a product of the American Church, brought a native insight for the necessities of the Methodist Episcopal administration which balanced the powers and responsibilities with a workable democratic control. Lee, the father of representative ecclesiastical government, made a delegated General Conference possible even though he later

seemed to oppose the idea. Cooper, whose plan for the Constitution was rejected, exercised a modifying and corrective influence on the plan finally adopted. And Soule who, though only twenty-seven years of age in 1808, seemed born with the rare organizing genius for drawing principles out of incidents and who did not succumb to the temptation of advocating an unwarranted measure to meet a contingency, deserves the credit given him as the Father of the document.

Now with the Constitution established and accepted by long usage, we are likely to forget the struggles that produced it and the crises which were faced and resolved during the proceedings of adoption. The intensely human experiences of the tense days of the General Conference of 1808 should provide us with an example for meeting the crises caused by tense differences in our times. More than once during those sessions, like Paul on his storm-tossed ship, they "cast out the anchors and prayed for dawn." Only Asbury's tremendous personal influence as a man of character and sagacity brought the members back in session after they had decided to break up because of what seemed to be a hopeless impasse and to go home. The inflexible had to be budged and the volatile had to be restrained and those who sought only to have their own way had at last to realize that they were legislating for a church of many minds and of varied conditions under which the provisions of the Constitution must work. The result was far better than could have been anticipated. God's hand was surely in it. And the outcome was a workable agreement based on principle and formulated out of experience with built-in powers for adaptation and renewal.

Content

Furthermore, the full value and significance of the Constitution cannot be comprehended nor can its benefits be preserved apart from an understanding of its content. It is one thing to know what a document of this sort says and it is another to know what it means. Only through such understanding can we distinguish the essential from the non-essential, what can be given up or modified without destroying the document itself, and what must be retained at all costs.

As in an organism, there are certain sinews in the Constitution of the Methodist Church which if they are modified, invaded or nullified will mortally weaken the document itself. I wish to mention five. First, there is its provision for limited autonomy. The Methodist Church is a republic. The Constitution makes possible a strong central government and provides wide powers for local self-determination and expression. Its strength lies in its centralism which is derived and maintained by the give-and-take allowed in its component parts. Thus the central government does not become a vise nor a burden, but the channel of power which flows up from the basic body of the church which is the annual conference. It avoids the authoritarianism which denies the right of group expression and personal judgment. Thus it has not become oppressive. And it retains for the central government only those powers which will make it authoritative and therefore effective. The burden of an oppressive and vise-like overhead finds no favorable soil in Methodist constitutional government, be it in the form of program, board or administrative bodies.

Secondly, the Constitution provides for representative government. This was a major issue in at least two General Conferences preceding the Con-

ference of 1808, and finding a workable scheme of representative government provided the keystone for the constitutional arch. Then after the principle had been accepted for a delegated General Conference, the method of selecting delegates became the chief issue. The body could not be too small if it was to be representative nor too large if it was to be deliberate and legislative. A democratic process of selection also was a major concern. The principle of equal representation for all the Conferences had to be assured. In the decision we see how the spirit of concession worked finally for the effective scheme under which we still operate. The representative General Conference was desired by Soule and others. The political aspects of electioneering under these conditions was feared by Lee and his followers. The compromise was Soule's amendment that "each Annual Conference should have the power of sending their proportionate number of members to the General Conference either by seniority or choice as they shall think best." This disarmed Lee and preserved the principle of a delegated body and opened the way for the plan under which the church now operates. It is reported that after the vote the southern Lee said to the northern Soule, "Brother Soule, you have played me a Yankee trick." And though the move may have been what Lee called it, God turned it to His praise because it has proved to be a very wise provision which preserves even in this day of bigness the General Conference as a deliberative and legislative body.

The third sinew of the Constitution was its provision for the balancing of power through the division and limitation of authority and responsibilities between the executive, the legislative, the administrative and the judicial branches of the church's proposed government, a division whose recognition and protection insures the democratic spirit and process in government. The activism of modern society, along with a tendency to huge promotional schemes and a disregard for the free operation of representative government and the aggressiveness of dominant personalities, have at times dimmed the boundaries of these divisions and their powers and led to their annulment by what the legal profession calls the rules of "laches," that is, sleeping upon your rights and losing them by not asserting them. An understanding of the nature and purpose of these divisions of government and an alertness to maintain and protect them is essential for preserving unity in a church as large as the Methodist. For this a thorough knowledge of constitutional government is essential in conducting the business of both the General and the Annual Conference. The present temper of our times, however, does not seem conducive to the development of constitutional lawyers, either lay or clerical, within the church.

The fourth basic provision of the Constitution was its restrictive rules, which guaranteed stability while providing for well-warranted and carefully-tested proposals for change. Originally six in number, they remain to this day the same with the exception of the one providing for size and ratio of membership in the General Conference which is now covered in another section of the Constitution.

These restrictive rules were intended to protect and preserve what our Fathers thought to be the essential in episcopal Methodism. In their form they expressed a basic procedure in Methodist action which maintains stability for permanence with a provision for flexibility to prevent stagnation and to allow for the pragmatic principle of change when conditions

clearly warrant it. They were intended to make changes difficult but not impossible. Their purpose was to restrain the hand which would alter or destroy the order to take care of a particular or a passing situation. To use a hackneyed expression, these restrictive rules were a safety device to prevent the church under extreme provocation from "throwing the baby out with the bath."

The nature and purpose of the restrictive rules must always be kept in the forefront of Methodism's legislative thinking. So long as they are understood and the purpose and outcome of legislation are tested in the light of the effect upon the principles embodied in these restrictive rules, Methodism will be preserved. When legislation is enacted without regard for these principles or the precedents established by legal interpretation, Methodism may continue in name but it will lose the distinctiveness which accounts for its greatness.

The Constitutional Conference in 1808 was concerned about preserving the purity of Methodist doctrine contained in the Articles of Religion as revised and interpreted by John Wesley, and the first restrictive rule stipulated that "the General Conference shall not revoke, alter, or change our Articles of Religion or establish any new standards or rules contrary to our present existing and established standards." This rule is still the law of the church and its administration through these one hundred and fifty years in the spirit of John Wesley, who gave wide latitude for expression on matters which he called "theological speculation," has avoided those distressing and disastrous doctrinal schisms which have plagued other denominations. While the method of amendment has safeguarded the church from the vise-like grip which can be exercised by the dead hand of the past, it has also provided a means for keeping Methodism's theological message relevant.

The importance of Methodism's doctrinal statement is emphasized by the fact that for this one restrictive rule a different requirement for amendment is provided. A three-fourths vote of the General Conference and the Annual Conferences instead of the two-thirds vote required for changing the other restrictive rules is necessary to change the rule on doctrine. And in claiming a place for Methodism in the doctrinal position of evangelical Protestantism, contemporary scholars would do well to return to a consideration of what Methodism has from the beginning held essential to salvation and to its interpretation in contemporary and understandable language. Here is a real contribution which Methodism can make to the ecumenical movement.

The restrictive rule governing the episcopacy has been called by the constitutional authority, Dr. John T. Tigert, "elemental in the government of Methodism." To change Methodism's "superintending and appointing power," he said, "would destroy the system." The third restrictive rule in the original document is the second restrictive rule in the present Constitution, and in the intervening years the language of this rule has not been altered. "The General Conference shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government so as to do away episcopacy or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency." The Fathers saw in the general superintendency as developed by Bishop Asbury the administrative power necessary for Methodism's effectiveness and growth. They debated in the 1808 General Conference a diocesan form of episcopacy as proposed by Ezekiel

Cooper, and rejected it. Had this method of supervision been adopted, the centralization and expansion of the Methodist Church would have been inherently hampered, and any policy which increases the number of bishops, without opportunity to administer beyond their areas, could by indirection accomplish the overthrow of this Methodist doctrine of the episcopacy. They also wisely left the direction of this itinerant supervision in the hands of the bishops themselves. Where responsibility rests, there also the methods for its fulfillment must rest.

This "constitutional charter" of the episcopacy avoided the debatable authenticity of the "historic episcopate" and admitted of adaptations which to this day have met the supervisional needs of a world church while retaining the original character and authority of a methodistic episcopacy as on office and not an order.

The general rules of the united societies, also found in the Discipline, were also to be essential and their perpetuation was therefore assured by the restrictive rule which prohibited their revocation or change without due constitutional procedure. Though widely neglected in the church today by superficial minds, who refer to them facetiously on the false assumption that they are an anachronism, a study of them reveals their practical wisdom and their relevance for our contemporary conduct as a church. In fact, to their neglect and disparagement is attributed by scholars of church administration the dulling of some of Methodism's most essential features.

Unique in church legislation at that time was the restrictive rule setting apart the profits of the Publishing House and the Book Concern as a trust to be used for the traveling, supernumerary, superannuated and worn out preachers, their wives, widows and children, and with it this new and pioneering venture in social responsibility entered the administration of Protestant churches.

The fifth bulwark of our Methodism is set forth in the restrictive rule which provides a "bill of rights" for the ministers and laymen of Methodism by guaranteeing the right of trial and appeal to both when accused. While we now take for granted such protection of individual rights, in Asbury's day it was an issue which the Constitution makers for the New World were debating. Today the principle is denied in governments which control half the population of the world. In fact, a strong reason for the support of constitutional government centered in the protection a Constitution would guarantee for such personal rights. The provision of trial by one's peers was another manifestation of Asbury's philosophy that fundamental authority rests in the body to be governed.

Particular reference to each of the restrictive rules has been made because of the place they occupy in the Constitution itself. Tigert likened them to the main spring of a watch. All proposed changes in the Constitution have always been considered in the light of their effect upon these rules. They act as polestars for the guidance of the Constitution makers, and their place and protection in the Constitution itself have reminded succeeding General Conferences that change is desirable only when it advances and does not destroy these sources of the church's strength.

That the seed planted in the New World by the followers of Wesley

would grow to the mighty proportions of its present form, no one in the 1808 General Conference envisaged. That it has multiplied a hundred fold and spread to cover the earth can be attributed to this instrument known as the Constitution which gave it life and provided for its growth. This document has been the life line which kept Methodism one people in separation and supplied the point of cohesion when the separated bodies reunited in 1939.

Significance

The significance and importance of the Constitution must never be lost to sight throughout the entire church. An appreciation of its function and intention is essential to episcopal Methodism's preservation. Combining the effectiveness of centralization with the freedom of local autonomy was in 1808 a new thing in ecclesiastical polity. And what it did we must be jealous to safeguard. Without the practical operation of what Bishop Edgar Blake described as a "combination of centralization for connectional control with distribution of authority for local efficiency" the reunion of American Methodism could not have been achieved, nor could our world-wide Methodism have been held together in one body. Likewise the unity we seek within our world Methodist family finds its possibility in this combination of centralization and local autonomy so satisfactorily balanced in the provisions of the Constitution.

Methodism has been able not only to keep the form of democracy but the spirit of it as well. Bigness tends to make democracy cumbersome and unwieldy. So far this has not happened in the united church. Centralization and regional autonomy have been maintained in a working balance which has allowed for adjustment, creativeness and self-determination within the frame of Methodism's oneness as a church. For this we are indebted to the wisdom of the men of 1808 and the providential guiding which resulted in the meeting of minds in that Constitution-framing General Conference. They legislated better than they knew.

Changes have come to the organizations of the church in these one hundred and fifty years. They have been in the nature of accommodations which have not altered the original constitutional structure nor affected its legal nor ecclesiastical design. Judicial interpretations have safeguarded the original intent of the church's basic document of government and also opened new and wider areas of service within the frame of the constitutional provision. Organization has multiplied in response to the spirit of the times and to the managerial and promotional needs of the rapidly expanding church. But these additions and adjustments have made the church more effective. They have not changed the church's nature. The balance still holds, and the division of powers and prerogatives which makes for happy and democratic productivity maintains its original lines of demarcation. Always, however, there must be an alertness to preserve these areas of authority and responsibility as set forth in the Constitution from invasion even when such intrusion is the result of the best of intentions. Let the Judiciary interpret, let the Conferences legislate, let the Boards manage and let the Episcopacy lead, execute and administer.

On this sesquicentennial anniversary of the Constitution of the Methodist Church we report that

Thus far God's led us on our way,
Thus far we've moved toward His new day
Thus far we've sought His guiding hand;
O God, forsake us not!

NOTES

The Commission to Study the Jurisdictional System, set up by the 1956 General Conference of The Methodist Church, U.S.A., is continuing its difficult task. A research report indicated that few churches have shifted from the all-Negro Jurisdiction to one of the prevailingly white Jurisdictions. Of 45 churches currently involved in such transfers, only six have completed the proceedings.

Before the parliamentary elections in Australia, Dr. A. Harold Wood, president-general of Methodism, flew to Sydney to speak on, "Christian Principles in an Election." He underscored two topics: Australian attitudes toward Asian countries, and Australian policies on war and peace.

Rev. Frederic Greeves, principal of Didsbury College, Bristol, England, will give the Cato lectures at the 1960 General Conference of Australian Methodism. Rev. Maldwyn Edwards was the previous Cato lecturer.

When the Missionary Committee of British Methodism had a recent meeting at Mission House, London, it heard of the tangled web of politics in the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland, the struggle with poverty in the West Indies, the ministry of reconciliation in Ceylon. Mrs. W. Russell Shearer, treasurer of the Woman's Work fund, reported an increase of 12,746.

Accompanied by British and Italian youth, Rev. Reginald Kissack, in charge of the Methodist mission in Italy, visited Rapolla. No announcement had been made of the meeting, and the group did not arrive until after 6 o'clock, but within an hour the church was full. Four runners had summoned a crowd.

EVANGELISM IN THE WORLD PARISH

Prepared by Dr. George H. Jones, *for the Committee on Evangelism, World Methodist Council*

Beginning in 1960, The Methodist Church should have a "Decade of Dynamic Discipleship," Dr. Harry Denman, of the Committee on Evangelism, believes. He says that Methodists should increase their numbers by 50,000 each year of the next decade. Other goals he listed were: 500 new churches a year and a net increase annually of 100 ministers and 25 missionaries. "We need a decade that will be given to discipleship, deeds, and doctrine," he declared.

Prayer Vigils for Peace is being sponsored throughout 1959 in many different countries and in thousands of churches by the World Wide Prayer Life Movement. Many churches will have 24-hour prayer vigils, sponsored by their districts and conferences, according to Dr. Thomas A. Carruth, prayer life leader.

A series of conferences on spiritual birth and growth are being held in the United States in January and February 1959. They are under the direction of Dr. G. Ernest Thomas, director of spiritual life, with Dr. W. Sydney Callaghan, Methodist leader of Belfast, Ireland, the featured guest speaker. Dr. Callaghan is the youngest superintendent of evangelism that Irish Methodism has ever had.

Following the national Convocation on Evangelism in the Local Church at Washington, D.C., in July, 1958, convocations were held in many districts throughout the United States and are recommended for churches in 1959.

The General Board of Evangelism of the Methodist Church, U.S.A., has established a Department of Personal Evangelism with a "one-win-one" idea. Year ago it established a Department of Visitation Evangelism with its organized "two by two" home visitation idea. A Minnesota layman, Harold S. Rogers, heads this new department.

The Methodist Church, U.S.A., has organized at least 1,053 new congregations in the United States in the last eight and one-half years, an average of 124 a year or about one new church every three days, according to a survey entitled "Methodism's New Churches, 1950-1958," released by the Division of National Missions of the Board of Missions.

The Council of Evangelism, an auxiliary to the General Board of Evangelism, will meet in Hollywood, Calif., on October 14-20, 1959,

and will conduct an evangelistic mission in Hollywood and Los Angeles. Approximately 300 Methodist ministers will participate.

Two significant volumes on evangelism have recently been released: 176-page compendium entitled *Forward in Evangelism in Your Local Church*; and *God's Good News*, a 208-page volume containing the addresses delivered at the Methodist Convocation of Evangelism in Washington, D.C.

A large stained glass window on the theme of Pentecost is being installed in the Upper Room Chapel at Nashville, Tenn., U.S.A., says Dr. J. Manning Potts, editor of *The Upper Room*, internationally circulated devotional guide. The four main medallions in the center of the window will depict the first Pentecost. Other designs will show contributions made by leaders of different communions.

One Norwegian succeeded another as editorial associate for *The Upper Room* in its headquarters offices in Nashville, Tenn., U.S.A., when the Rev. Lief Sevre replaced the Rev. W. M. Heggoy who is returning to Algeria as a missionary. Mrs. Gertrude Koenke of Germany is also on *The Upper Room* staff as a linguist. This devotional magazine now is published in 37 editions in 30 different languages. Most of the language editions are edited, printed, and distributed in the countries they serve.

In England on every Wednesday night, members of the six centers of the Hull Methodist Mission, have visited non-church-goers. The purpose is "not to visit as many houses as possible, but to get to know people and move on to the other houses only when it appears that there is little prospect of winning their allegiance or helping them further." Over one hundred persons in Hull responded to an appeal for volunteers for this "Adventure in Evangelism," and were trained as a School of Evangelism.

A House Church or House Meeting movement has been started in Europe. Using the technique and the spiritual values inherent in a small group meeting for Bible study and spiritual discussion, the movement has proved to be a means of evangelism as well as a method of deepening the spiritual life of the local church. In Scotland the House Church movement began as a means of practical service, but soon spread into evangelism.

The greatest evangelistic lay movement in action in Central Europe is the Kirchentag in Germany which sometimes attracts as many as 200,000 persons, according to Bishop Sigg of The Methodist Church in

Central Europe. The Kirchentag was started by Reinhold von Tadden Trieglaff, a layman, who originated the idea in a Russian prison camp. The Kirchentag does much in giving strength and power for the facing of personal problems amidst the tensions between Eastern and Western Germany. Also it emphasizes the responsibility of the Church in society today.

The Methodist and Evangelical Lutheran Churches have done a great work in Austria in recent months, according to Bishop Sigg of Switzerland. Of special significance is their service to the Hungarian refugees in Austria.

Celebrating its 100th anniversary, the Methodist Church of Denmark held a series of festive services in its oldest sanctuary, the Jerusalem Church in Copenhagen. Bishop Odd Hagen of the Northern Europe Central Conference and Dr. E. Benson Perkins, secretary of the World Methodist Council's European section, were two of the main centennial speakers. Since the founding of Methodist work in Denmark in 1858, the Church has grown to a membership of about 4,000 persons and 25 full-time pastors.

In Uruguay a special evangelistic mission was held in September with eight minister-laymen teams from Argentina participating. A simultaneous preaching and visitation mission was held in every Methodist church in Montevideo. This is a follow-up of the evangelistic mission held a year ago in Uruguay and Argentina by 20 ministers from the United States.

The El Salvador Methodist Church in Cochabamba, Bolivia, has started its second outpost church school within three years. Forty children attend open-air Sunday school on a vacant lot; 80 persons attend worship in a two-room adobe house.

"The consecration and dedication of our Methodist missionaries was an inspiration to behold. They are of such calibre of character that we were humbled and led to a closer walk with God." Thus spoke the Rev. C. Ray Hozendorf, pastor of First Church, Magnolia, Ark., one of 32 U. S. Methodists who took part in an evangelistic mission to Bolivia, Chile and Peru during September and early October. Dr. George H. Jones directed the mission. The missionaries held 312 services, trained 315 ministers and laymen in visitation evangelism, and won at least 119 new members.

Two leaders of the Board of Evangelism, Nashville, Tenn., Dr. Harry

Denman and the Rev. Dr. J. Manning Potts, and seven other American Methodists participated in an evangelistic mission in Pakistan and India in October and November, 1958. The party went at the invitation of the Board of Missions and the bishops of the two countries.

A specialized type of evangelism, Bible correspondence courses, is being conducted by the Methodists and other denominations in South India. More than 70,000 non-Christians are reported to be enrolled in Bible study in one language alone, Tamil. The Methodist Church conducts a course of Urdu lessons in the Gospel of John. More than 4,000 persons are enrolled, many of them Moslems. Some already have been converted to Christianity.

The annual synod of the Methodist Church in Italy unanimously endorsed the carrying out of a plan to "integrate" pastoral work and evangelism in local areas with parallel activities of the Waldensian Church in the same fields. Reports indicated growth in membership and contributions in the seven circuits, having 55 local churches. Ninety-eight former Roman Catholics were reported to have become Methodists. A steady progress toward the goal of financial self-support was reported.

Bishop Ferdinand Sigg of Zurich, Switzerland, recently had a number of speaking engagements in the United States.

Missionaries from at least 10 European countries are serving in Methodist areas of Africa. Among the countries represented are Sweden, Norway, Germany, France, Belgium, Hungary, Portugal, Finland and Switzerland. Bishop Ralph E. Dodge of the Lourenco Marques Area says: "It is hoped that from many branches of Methodism will come missionaries to make their contribution to the spiritual welfare of a continent in transition."

South American Methodist churches are becoming missionary-sending as well as missionary-receiving bodies. The Federation of Methodist Women of Latin America is supporting three young women in Peru, Chile, and Bolivia, each serving in a country other than her native land. An Argentinian Methodist doctor is working among the Indians in Bolivia.

Five Methodist missionaries from the Philippines are serving overseas. The first went to Okinawa in 1954; the most recent, a doctor, is doing medical work among Malayan Chinese refugees.

The international Methodist medical team working among Sarawak's Ibans includes not only Americans but Chinese, Sumatran Bataks, Filipinos and most recently English missionaries. The group is to be joined later this year by two Methodist workers from India.

A mission in 25 unchurched areas in Japan was held in July and August by a group of 33 persons from the United States. These missioners, under the direction of Dr. and Mrs. Lawrence L. Lacour of the Methodist General Board of Evangelism, U.S.A., were from various denominations. Their major emphasis was on winning persons to Christ and establishing new churches.

The United Church of Christ in Japan, which was formed by a number of denominations including the Methodists of Japan, now has a full-time secretary of evangelism, who gives special emphasis to the opening of new churches.

Toyohiko Kagawa, Japan's best-known Christian leader, received an Upper Room distinguished-service citation on his 70th birthday July 10 in Tokyo. He was cited for his world-wide contribution to the devotional literature of the church and for his Christian social work. The citation was presented by the Rev. Dr. Lawrence L. Lacour of Nashville, Tenn., U.S.A.

Eighteen Christians, including 12 members of the United Church of Christ of Japan (of which Methodism is a part), have been elected to the Japanese House of Representatives, which is the lower house of the Diet (Parliament). Though Christians comprise only one-half of one percent of Japan's population, they will make up four percent of the House membership. For what is believed to be the first time, a Christian minister, the Rev. Sekikazu Nishimura, was elected to the House.

A Japanese lady said: "Americans are crazy. Had we won the war we would have stripped their land. They win the war and pour billions into our land and rebuild Japan." Yes, the U.S.A. is crazy and it is the Gospel of Christ that has made her so. This overwhelming expression of mercy where hate and revenge might have been the order of the day, has prepared the "land of the Rising Sun" with its 90 million people for the Gospel of the grace and mercy of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Let us pray for Japan, as in 1959 the Christians there celebrate the centenary of the coming of the first ambassadors for Christ, that it may be a glorious time of revival for the Church in that country.

(From a letter from F. J. Huegel, missionary to Mexico.)

In one of its newest mission fields, the island of St. Croix in the Virgin Islands, The Methodist Church, U.S.A., has begun a comprehensive ministry which is intended eventually to reach almost half of the island's 12,000 people. As the first church building rises workers are undertaking programs of education of children, literacy for adults, evangelism and social development. The multiphased ministry is designed especially for 4,800 Puerto Ricans, who have immigrated to St. Croix in recent years.

Methodists in the southern Belgian Congo have built a new Christian social center to help serve the needs of thousands of African families in a suburb of the mining city of Elisabethville. The center is intended especially to meet the needs of youth in the fast-growing housing development where it is located.

The Upper Room has conferred upon the Rev. Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert its 1958 churchman honors. The citation, made at a dinner in New York City, was in recognition of Dr. Cavert's contributions to world Christian fellowship. Dr. Cavert, a Presbyterian, has devoted his life to the ecumenical movement.

Bishop Richard C. Raines of the United States was awarded Korea's Cultural Honor Medal on Oct. 4, 1958, in Seoul. President Syngman Rhee cited Bishop Raines for his "many significant contributions to the Korean church and the Korean people."

Tribute was paid to the first American Methodist bishop, Francis Asbury, at a recent service in Old St. George's Church in Philadelphia, one of the shrines of Methodism. The service marked the publication of the three-volume "*Journal and Letters of Asbury.*" Bishop Fred Pierce Corson, head of the Philadelphia Area, addressed representatives from several hundred churches. In St. George's Church Bishop Asbury preached his first sermon upon arriving from England in 1771 to to take charge of Methodist work here. Dr. Elmer T. Clark, Dr. J. Manning Potts and Dr. Jacob S. Payton were the editors of this monumental work.

Methodists of the world have been talking about publishing an *Encyclodepia of Methodism* for 50 years, and now they are going to start to work on it. The Rev. Dr. Elmer T. Clark, executive secretary of the Association of Methodist Historical Societies and secretary of the World Methodist Council, will take a leading part in its planning and compilation. This project will require several years.

Fifty-three workers of evangelism and visitation from 24 states recently attended the first national workshop for workers in Nashville, Tenn., U.S.A. Included were ordained ministers and lay men and women from large churches. More than one hundred workers are expected at the second workshop which will be held following Easter in 1959.

Fourteen Methodist churches in Alaska are in process of building or remodeling their sanctuaries.

Methodist participants ranging in age from 15 to 95 shared in ceremonies in New York on Oct. 12, 1958, when President Eisenhower laid the cornerstone of the new Interchurch Center. Several Methodist agencies will become tenants on completion of this rapidly-rising 19-story building on Morningside Heights. Bishop Herbert Welch, 95, offered the invocation and prayed that Christians may be one, "one in purpose and deed, one in fellowship of the spirit." Dr. Ralph W. Sockman gave the address, and the 15-year-old Robert Bromley Oxnam, grandson of Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, carried the banner of the Methodist Church in the impressive processional.

The Methodist Church in the United States and its territories now numbers 9,691,916 full members and an additional 1,470,697 preparatory members, according to the 1958 Annual Conference reports. A total of 754,275 members were received during the year (373,102 of them on profession of faith) but losses by death, transfer, and other causes cut the net gain down to 125,287, or 1.3 per cent. The population rise in the United States was 1.8 per cent.

Among recent deaths are: Dr. R. L. M. Waugh, former president of the Methodist Church in Ireland, and one of its most distinguished scholars. Retired Bishop Ralph A. Ward, who was serving the Taiwan-Hong Kong Provisional Annual Conference of the Methodist Church. Bishop Arthur J. Moore, of Atlanta, will add Hong Kong to his regular assignment until the General Conference of 1960.

The Southeastern Jurisdictional Convocation of The Methodist Church, U.S.A., scheduled its quadrennial meeting at Atlanta, Georgia February 17-19, 1959. Among the featured speakers: Dr. Harold Roberts, President of the World Methodist Council, and Dr. Maldwyn Edwards, chairman of the Cardiff District in Great Britain.

MORE ASBURY LETTERS

Since the recent publication of the *Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury* several additional letters and documents have come to light. They are printed below. The notes were prepared by Dr. J. Manning Potts, Editor-in-Chief of the volume of letters in the work above mentioned.

Colonel Robert Carter was a prominent planter of Westmoreland County, Virginia. He lived at Nomeni Hall and was called Counsellor Carter. Bishop Whatcoat visited Carter with Asbury. He was a Baptist but several members of his family became Methodists. Asbury visited Colonel Carter on several occasions.

[January 8, 1787]

[Mr. Robert Carter]
Dear Sir,

Having been poorly for Several days and taken this Morning with an attack of my complaint more violent than Usual, so that I thought it expedient to take some Medicine which prevents my complying with my obligation. I am sorry that I am depriv'd of the happiness of seeing you and family at your house, but as providence forbids I wish to submit, and hope you will excuse, Dear Sir, your affectionate and

Humble Servant
[Francis Asbury]
Chicago Historical Society

* * * *

John Page was one of the earliest preachers in the Holston Conference of which Kentucky in the beginning was a part. It was John Page for whom Page's meeting house near Radford, Virginia, was named. It dates from 1783. In 1794 Page was on the Danville, Kentucky, Circuit.

[To John Page]
Preacher of the word
Kentucky. [Mar. 23, 1794]
My very dear Brother,

It may be you can stay another year at Sweet Kentucky, if not you must return. I hope you will not think of leaving the blessed work of God, at such a time of need, when souls are perishing, preachers deserting, some dying, others departing from the living Lord. Lord, and are there few that be saved from all sin among preachers & people? Oh! Brothers, nothing will do but holiness to preach to others, to live ourselves; hold it forth constantly, powerfully, in every discourse.
It grieves me I cannot see you this year. If my life is worth keeping it must be for the continent as well as Kentucky. I am your friend present or absent. If you are in want let me know. The Lord Jesus be with thy spirit.
As ever thine

[F. Asbury]
Vanderbilt University Library

In 1805 William Colbert was presiding Elder on the Eastern Shore of Delaware, Maryland and Virginia. His district was Chesapeake District. James Smith was on the Susquehannah District. Asbury thought of changing them. However he later changed his mind as the appointments did not materialize.

[Baltimore, April 16, 1805]

[To William Colbert]
My very dear Brother,

Grace and peace attend thee and thine and then that Branch of the church of God under your oversight.

I am sorry that my letters from Charleston hath miss carried, be assured I wrote. We have had gracious conferences, strictly shut up and well disciplines, none but members admitted upon any consideration, no not those upon trial. We have great and glorious prospects in the union. 7000 members increase, exclusive of deaths, removals, and expulsions, and withdrawn. 50 preachers admitted in the Four Conferences that have had their settings. Several located men readmitted. I have some serious thoughts about a change of the Presiding Elders of the Susquehannah and Chesapeak. Perhaps some things in the former case may make it ready, how you may feel I cannot say. I am not forward to increase that order only as they are necessary—Changes taking place will be many of which we cannot say, only anticipate.

I am as ever thine

[F. Asbury]

Chicago Historical Society

* * * *

There are several letters in the Asbury collection from Francis Asbury to George Roberts. He had been one of the most faithful correspondents of Asbury. He had studied medicine when he was in Philadelphia and in 1806 located to practice medicine. He became a local preacher.

[To George Roberts]

The Baltimore Conference have consented to your Exercising the office of an Elder to your Located Station, so long as your principles, spirit, and practice shall be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ.
[March 21st 1806]

Signed in, and by order
of the Conference
[Francis Asbury]

[1]Baltimore
Conference
of
Eighteen Hundred
and
six
To
George Roberts
March 21st, 1806

[1]This on the back of the envelope.

Chicago Historical Society

This letter was inserted in the minutes of the Western Conference of 1808. It is preceded by the preface which is printed here. The Conference was held at the home of Major Green Hill.

The Conference Proceeded to receive the Address of the Committee Appointed to draw up an Address to our Brethern requesting them to make an Annual Collection by subscription or otherwise to meet the distresses of the most indigent, and as far as possible to meet the deficencies of the Preachers.

Resolved that the Address be received and signed by the Bishops, and that a coppy of the same be put into the hands of the assistant of every Circuit.

[Liberty Hill, Tennessee, October 7th, 1808.]

The Western Conference Assembled to all under Her Patronage Sendeth Greeting.

Dear Brethren: We feel ourselves as much as ever interested in the happiness of our fellow creatures and are conscious that a large field is opening in almost every direction for the spread of the Gospel. Hundreds and thousands are inviteing us to come to their help, many valuable men are willing to take up their Cross and brook all the difficulties of an itenerant life in order to spread the gospel of the Redeemer's Kingdom, but we lack means for their supply, for after all the exertions that have been made in the several Circuits and the conscientious application of $470, which is all we receive from the Book Concern and the Chartered Fund, we still find ourselves insolvent $2,016.34½. We have therefore thought proper to address you on the occasion and solicit your assistance to inable us to spread useful knowledge and do all the good we possibly can.

We hope, dear Brethren, you will not be backward in setting your hands to paper and giving us your word that you will pay us whatever sums you may think proper to affix to your names. We wish you to understand us, we do not mean that these collections are to be applied to the preachers as their Quarterage. We hope you will do all you can to make up their preachers their allowance in their several Circuits, and that this extra collection be transmitted to the Annual Conference to meet the destresses of the more indegent. We assure you dear Brethern that we shall be particular in the distrebution of whatever sum or sums you may please to forward to us.

We conclude by praying that God may prosper you in your souls and bodies, in your baskett and store, and when our toils and sufferings are at an end we hope to meet you in the land of Rest.

We are, dear Brethern, yours in the bonds of a peaceable Gospel.

William Burk, Secty.

Francis Asbury
William McKendree

William Warren Sweet, The Rise of Methodism In The West, Smith & Lamar, Nashville

* * * *

This report is printed in W. W. Sweet's—The Rise of Methodism In The West. It is not a letter but an answer to a question asked in the Annual

Conference. Since it shows the position of the Western Conference on slavery it is a very interesting and informative document. The conference was held at the home of the Major Green Hill, well known Methodist who had formerly lived in North Carolina. He was a local preacher.

The report of the Committee appointed to Draft a Rule on the Subject of Slavery, haveing been amended, the Conference proceeded to take a vote on the report as amended and adopted the following regulations:

WESTERN ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Quest. What method shall be taken with a member of our Society that shall enter into the Slave Trade and shall buy or sell a Slave or Slaves?

Ansser. Every preacher who has the charge of a Circuit shall upon information received cite every such member or members so buying or selling a Slave or Slaves to appear at the insueing Quarterly Meeting Conference and there to submit his or their case to the judgment of the said Quarterly Meeting Conference who shall proceed to determine wheather the Person or Persons have purchased or sold such Slave or Slaves in a case of mercy or humanity or from speculative motives, and if a majority of the Quarterly Meeting Conference judge that they have bought or sold with such speculative motives they shall accordingly expel every such Person or Persons.

And in case the Presedent of the Quarterly Meeting Conference should differ in judgment from the majority and think they have retained the Person or Persons improperly, he may refer his or their case to the insueing Annual Conference and if any Person or Persons think they are injured by the dicision of the Quarterly Meeting Conference such Persons or Persons shall be allowed an appeal to the insueing Annual Conference, provided they signify the same to the Quarterly Meeting Conference at the time of trial, and the Presedent of the Quarterly Meeting Conference shall cause the minutes of such trial to be laid before the Annual Conference who shall judge and finally determine in every such case.

Francis Asbury
William McKendree

Liberty Hill, Tennessee, October 7th, 1808.
William Burk, Secty.

William Warren Sweet, The Rise of Methodism In The West, Smith & Lamar, Nashville

* * * *

Asbury was traveling in North Carolina and had been in Buncombe County. Thomas L. Douglass was the presiding elder on the Yadkin District in North Carolina. Asbury was giving Douglass a report of the Western Conference from which he had recently come. Only part of the letter has been preserved in Paine's Life and Times of Bishop McKendree.

[Near Cooper's Gab, N. C.]
November 2, 1808

[Rev. T. L. Douglass]

Prospects in the West exceedingly great. If we are correct, 3,437 increase; eighty-four preachers stationed; seven districts, two of them new. We

have a tract of country superior to the thirteen United States now under the oversight of the Western Conference. . . . Since (General) Conference, Brother Bishop McKendree has traveled, I presume, eighteen hundred miles through New Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana Territory, to Missouri and Tennessee, East and West. Our Western Conference was held in camp order in the woods, seven days. Prospects in Missouri are great and good. Bishop McKendree has magnified his office and penetrated farther to the West than I have already. From the Western Conference we have traveled rapidly, we were chiefly together. We hope to strike off a thousand or twelve hundred miles before the South Carolina Conference.

[Francis Asbury]

Paine, Robert, Life and Times of William McKendree

* * * *

This is one of the four Asbury letters which were found in the Chicago Historical Society after the volume of letters had gone to press. The date and place are not given but one can easily approximate them. The letter is mainly a report of the only visit that Asbury ever made to Canada. It was in the summer of 1811. Nathan Bangs was one of the pastors in New York. His name was on the bottom of the letter.

[Pittsburg, Pa.][1]
[September 2, 1811]

[To Nathan Bangs]
My dear Son,

Great grace wisdom and diligence and sincerity attend us all. I am pleased to hear you take courage. Have a truce and some peace and hopes and prospects of good among White society. I am pained for the poor Africans! Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me, a desire of being independent! We have traveled near one thousand miles since our departure from [New] York. You know the path from Barnard [Vt.] to St. Ridges [Rigis, N. Y.]. Take Champlain, St. Lawrence, Ontario, Log harber, 250 miles of this a lame inflamatory foot and riding upon one side! I would have gone to Bay Quinte but feared I should not make my way to Conference. Of the Provinces I can say but in part, I have seen but in part, but as in all other parts that are now I generally pay in visit 100 percent, nothing but the visits of the superintendancy, and the setting of the conference once in three years can secure the hard toil of the first and faithful labors of you men of God. Already labored and permited not [to go further] I see a prospect of great success in the provinces.

I feel a wish that the northend[2] should have a pastor. It is not well to have 2 preachers at one house and one congregation and no one at two others more important by being small. In this I can only wish, and tell the people I take my wishes to the preachers, they could not or would not wish it so. The Ruling Elder ought to be in the centre in the old society. I hope you will do well, but I cannot say I have confidence that you both do and

[1]It is clear from the letter that Asbury wrote this letter shortly after visiting Canada in 1811. At Pittsburg he wrote many letters on September 1 and 2nd. This is perhaps one of them.
[2]Northend. Asbury evidently refers to the church at North River which was the third church established in New York and which became Duane Street.

will do or perhaps can do the things we would command you. I am as ever yours.

[Francis Asbury]

P.S.

You will write Camden, South Carolina in December. I should hardly support under my toil was I not uncommonly aided by the Lord, the preachers, Brethren, and sisters.

Envelope—Rev. Nathan Bangs, New York

Chicago Historical Society

* * * *

This letter was printed in the New York Advocate and the introduction to it said that it was written to the Rev. R. W. Sale. This was evidently incorrect as there is no R. W. Sale listed in the minutes. However it was written to a presiding elder and Rev. John Sale was presiding elder on the Kentucky District in 1812 thus it was almost certainly to John Sale, a well known preacher. It was written from Judge Vanmeeter's, Asbury's old friend who lived in Jefferson, Ohio. Asbury's concerns for the presiding eldership and for sanctification are shown in the letter. The General Conference of 1812 had debated the question as to whether to elect or continue to appoint presiding elders. The movement to elect, led by Jesse Lee, has been defeated.

Judge Vanmeter's
September 24, 1812

My dear Son:

O what grace, wisdom, and fidelity we need, to lead and feed, and rule the flock of God. The days of visitation are come. Israel shall know it. The prudent will keep silence in these evil times. "May we keep the word of his patience, that he may keep us from what is coming upon all the earth, to try those who dwell in it." The charge of your family is great, but the charge of the church of God is greater. If you build the Lord's house, he shall build yours. But what a charge is a district—over every circuit-society-preachers, travelling and local-members, male and female-to try the gifts and usefulness of official men—to suggest all possible help and information to the bishops in stationing the preachers—to be our ears and mouths to the people, and their ears and mouths to us—to teach discipline, to convince our preachers and people of the propriety of our form of government; because it is apostolical, and calculated for a travelling ministry, as our great fort, distinct from all other people.

I often review our success in forty-one years, near two hundred thousand in fellowship, the pious that have died in our fellowship and under our ministry, perhaps forty thousand: that we must congregate three million of souls; and if we have people that neither fear nor love God, in society, we have many hearers that do fear and love God, and when they come to die we have demonstration without doubt. I have drawn out, by a gentle touch, B. Ware,[1] on the great question of appointing Presiding Elders. I shall wish the members of General Conference in each Annual Conference, to give me their advice how to conduct the business. As I am a kind of Vice President,[2] I feel more disinterested, yet deeply concerned, for the

[1]Though the initial B. is used here the initial is probably incorrect. Thomas Ware was one of the two book stewards and is probably the one Asbury had drawn out. No B.. Ware is listed in the minutes.

[2]Asbury had appointed McKendree to serve as president.

general good, general union, general order and general administration!—some say, "While you live." O what a reed shaken in the wind I am. I feel indeed, as if it was my duty to debate with the opposers of the established mode of Methodism that has been conducted till John Wesley's death; and well ordered in America for forty-one years—brought into a most harmonious plan, going on twenty-nine years.

I fear a great failure in the doctrine of sanctification. I have my doubts that some of our old men neither feel it, believe it, nor preach it as heretofore. O, brother, cry aloud and spare not, on purity, gospel holiness.

I have flattered myself this year to ride six thousand miles, to meet the nine Conferences, and four camp meetings; but I am nothing; but it is not what I will contend for, now stepping up to sixty-seven years. But if Mr. Wesley and myself have assumed a power we could have no evangelical right to, and no qualifications from God or man could possess us of it, whether we have not been doing wrong, and God has strangely crowned our wrong with success? that is the rub; and if all power exercised under us is not unwarrantably wrong? Lay these things to heart.

I am yours,
F. Asbury

* * * *

This letter was written to Thomas Haskins, then a grocer in Philadelphia. He began as a preacher but located. He was a very active churchman and a great friend of Asbury. Haskins refers to Mother Potts. His first wife was Martha Potts.

EAST TENNESSEE, FRENCHBROAD RIVER, Oct. 18, 1814.

Great Grace attend us, in Great days of distress, in the States; and in the Churches: *Zion Languisheth.* The Superabundant goodness of my dear Philadelphians and others still liveth upon my soul; excuse my seeming severity, when pressed so exceedingly. I traced the foot-steps of providence, after 700 miles and 12 weeks. I had said B. McKendree must not be a man of straw; but steel, if he wrought his way to Cincinnati, Ohio Conference. After all things well, to the West of Pennsylvania, the Bishop, was thrown from his horse; seriously bruised on the hip, and Ribs; he is on a Crutch. I am a reed shaken with the wind! God is with me! we have Travelled about 1500 miles, incredibly bad *roads, heat, drought, Dust.* Wesley Bond made himself merry, at the thought of riding Eight or 9 miles per day when driving 9 days! The pleasure we felt in disposing of the sacred goodness of the Bible Society. It was from *pike* to *pike*, from *house* to *house.* A venerable mother; her person put me in mind, (of our dear Friend, and Mother Potts, of Coventry. Long since gone to her Eternal rest and reward!) The aged Mother we gave a Testament to, could not hide, but confessed her daughter some time past wishes a book of God to read. Oh the gratitude of the receiver! Oh the joy, felt by handing to these precious souls; the pure Truth of God, sown by the way side, it shall spring up. A respectable couple at another Gate newly at housekeeping; were poor without the Treasures of the world of God. The Brethern in the Ohio Conference could only receive 2 Testaments per share, when they, and the Brethern of Tennessee, would have handed ten; Yes, my Friend, to the extremities *Ohio, Kentucky,*

Illinois, Tennessee, Mississippi and all the western country. The books handed to the Philadelphia Conference, and sent to their western Brethern; the goodness of the female Bible Society, shall be duly honoured, and sent into solitary places, where few families, have any copies of the Oricles of God! I conclude should there be a disposition to send hundreds to our western Conferences, no men are more willing, or in such preparation, as our travelling preachers to have Books. We say, know yet a spot where the Gospel is not preached, in the United States tell us and we will send soon Missionaries there. I recommend the Societies to ticket their books. Perhaps some will say it is a Political trick; others will say, the books came across the Atlantic. I presume the Devil and the Diests, are not a little vexed that the word of Truth prevails. If a man shall gain greatly by printing the Bible, "Oh it is a money getting thing" says the infidel. If a number of Christians of many Denominations unite—oh there is some Political Craft; but wisdom is Justified of her children. I should be pleased that the number of members, of the Bible Society of different religious communities, was given in Mass; upon the Ticket. Amen. Dear Thomas be ye faithful, be ye diligent, be ye holy. Our felicity was honoured to carry 100 Testaments from Cincinati to Logan County in Kentucky, to Tennessee Conference, 300 are very near perpetual motion in our Felicity. We shall if we ride 500 miles, call new wheels, and under work next Fall. I have bought another horse 60 dollars, how will that comport with 100 per year and 3 and 6 dollars and 25 hours Tavern Bills. But the Earth is the Lord's and the fulness there of! My Christian salutation to all that ask for me. Dear Michael he fell for me, I fell for him. It seemed to me he was near to Death, or Death near to him. Of may I live, to see the (torn) *and soul keep silence*, pray we mightily possibly we may be hidden in the Day of adversity! I only and I continue to do Something like preaching, when we have an opportunity; but I shall depend upon riding 200 miles a week. As to Conference, I only direct the men, the courses. John Sale presided in the Ohio Conference by my appointment, and asked our pardon, I think he made out abundantly better that I could at best, nor could the Bishop have done better; is my opinion. The help of the presiding Elder is great; we have a great work to appoint and Govern 53 men, our *Eyes, Ears, Mouth, Hands* and *Feet*. Farewell, as ever to thee and thine.

F. Asbury

Contributed by Herbert Dupuy, Esq., Pittsburgh, Pa. Found in Vol. 33, pp. 503-504, "The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography," The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 1909.

THE CHRISTMAS CONFERENCE

175TH. ANNIVERSARY

The one hundred seventy-fifth anniversary of the Christmas Conference which organized the Methodist Episcopal church first Methodist denomination in the world, will occur on December 24, 1959—January 3, 1960. It is understood that there will be a proper observance at Baltimore, where the Sesquicentennial was celebrated in 1934.

This event is of historical importance to all branches of Methodism in America. It is hoped that it will be widely celebrated all over the country.

SOUTHEASTERN CONVOCATION

The quadrennial convocation of the southeastern jurisdiction of the Methodist church, U.S.A., will be held at Wesley Memorial church, Atlanta, Georgia, on February 17-19, 1956. The President of the World Methodist Council, Dr. Harold Roberts, of Richmond College in England, will deliver two addresses as the official representative of the council.

Dr. Maldwyn Edwards, Chairman of the Cardiff and Swansea District of the British Methodist Church, will be one of the speakers.

The Convocation will be immediately preceded by the meeting of the Jurisdictional Woman's Society of Christian Service.

The Convocation of the South Central Jurisdiction will be held at Kansas City on April 7-9, 1959.

Ruth Hermann, of Spokane, Washington, U.S.A., was honored by the Board of Hospitals and Homes as "Miss Methodist Student Nurse" of 1959. She is a farmer's daughter, the youngest of five children.

Ninety-seven Methodist pastors were among the 317 clergymen who signed a statement on "The South's Racial Crisis," at Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A. They insisted that they did not favor "massive integration" of the races, but insisted that the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Constitution "has the effect of Law." They said that citizens have the right to correct judicial errors or repeal undesirable legislation but "they do not have the right to defy laws simply because they personally hold them to be unwise or harmful."

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